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Chair: Mr. Bhattarai ..... (Nepal)
Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Ruiz Massieu

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Organization of work (A/C.5/70/L.33)

1. **The Chair** said that peacekeeping operations would occupy a central position at the second part of the resumed session and that those items were time-bound, since they must be completed before the next peacekeeping budget cycle began on 1 July 2016. At the current part of the session, the Committee would also take up items related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the importance of which could not be overemphasized. The Committee was perhaps the most powerful Committee in the United Nations system, as its decisions shaped the system as a whole. If it worked well, the entire system worked well. The Committee should serve as a role model.

2. At both the main part of the session and the first part of the resumed session, the Committee had succeeded in finishing its work on time, and he hoped that that precedent would continue to be observed. To that end, he called on all delegations to continue to work in a spirt of compromise and consensus. The Committee must work the hours necessary to conclude its work on time but without compromising the quality of its deliberations.

3. He invited the Committee to consider the proposed tentative and provisional programme of work for the second part of the resumed seventieth session, prepared on the basis of the note by the Secretariat on the status of preparedness of documentation (A/C.5/70/L.33).

4. **Ms. Wairatpanij** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that at the second part of the resumed session the Committee was called upon to approve peacekeeping budgets totalling over $8 billion. Of equal importance was implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda — a top priority for the Group. Every effort should be made to ensure that the reports of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee on that item were introduced in a timely manner. Any attempt to further delay consideration would only damage the credibility of the Organization and hinder its ability to deliver on mandates given eight months previously, or 10 months in the case of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which was unacceptable.

5. The Group trusted that the Bureau would approach the issue of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Plan in a balanced manner and ensure that the programme of work provided for full and equal treatment of all agenda items, especially in terms of the allocation of sufficient time for substantive deliberations. To that end, the programme of work should be updated to reflect developments regarding the availability of reports and progress in negotiations. That would ensure that Member States had adequate time to consider each agenda item thoroughly. All delegations should engage constructively to ensure that the Committee completed its work in a timely manner.

6. The Group attached great importance to the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations, in particular cross-cutting issues, closed peacekeeping missions and the support account for peacekeeping operations. Those issues were all the more important in the light of the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, which set out a broad set of recommendations to reinvigorate the approach to peacekeeping operations.

7. At the current part of the session the Committee should ensure that peacekeeping budgets were formulated, presented and approved on the basis of mission mandates and the real situation on the ground, and not approached as an arbitrary, across-the-board cost-cutting exercise. It should explore options to resolve fairly the issues of unpaid assessments, accounts payable and other liabilities of closed peacekeeping missions, so as to settle outstanding claims in respect of missions with cash deficits. It should also assess the achievements and shortcomings of the global field support strategy at the end of its implementation period of five years. Lastly, it should address the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping operations, including measures to prevent such occurrences.

8. **Mr. Kisoka** (United Republic of Tanzania), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, commended those who had dedicated their lives to peacekeeping, especially those who had made the ultimate sacrifice.

9. The programme of work should be updated regularly to take into account progress made in negotiations and the availability of documents. The

Group was concerned that a large number of reports had been submitted late and had not been translated into all official languages. It noted in particular that the reports of the Advisory Committee had been delayed, which could have a negative impact on the work of the Fifth Committee and other intergovernmental bodies if immediate action was not taken. All stakeholders should redouble their efforts to ensure that all documents were introduced before the Committee in a timely manner. In addition, the calendar of the Advisory Committee should be revised and its working sessions extended in order to improve the conditions of service of its members and enable the Advisory Committee to deliver its increased workload.

10. The field trip conducted by Committee members in February 2016 had offered a welcome opportunity to identify the challenges faced by peacekeeping missions and the progress made. The Group would scrutinize the budget proposals to ensure that the issues observed on the ground were addressed in the decisions adopted.

11. The Group would also examine with particular interest the performance of and proposals in respect of all closed and active peacekeeping operations, the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe, the proposed budgets for special political missions, and the oversight activities of the Board of Auditors and Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS). In addition, the Group hoped that agreement would be reached on the long-awaited proposals in respect of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and on revised estimates for the Department of Political affairs on enhancing mediation capacity. The Group did not support deferment of those issues and encouraged delegations to address them.

12. The Committee had a heavy workload, but must complete its work on time so as not to affect the work of the Committee for Programme and Coordination. Lastly, the Committee should conduct its work in an open, inclusive and transparent manner, and refrain from negotiations in small configurations behind closed doors.

13. **Mr. Fermín** (Dominican Republic), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), said that CELAC attached the utmost importance to the administrative and budgetary aspects of United Nations peacekeeping operations; it was vital for those operations to have the necessary resources to implement their mandates. CELAC was especially interested in the financing of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the revised estimates for the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

14. With regard to cross-cutting issues, when addressing the recommendations presented in the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, the Committee should make a comprehensive, thorough and balanced assessment of both peacekeeping operations and special political missions, including their managerial, administrative and financial challenges. It was important to avoid a silo approach, as such an approach went against the objectives defined when the Independent Panel had been established.

15. It was regrettable that the Committee had been unable to agree on the necessary reform of the funding and backstopping arrangements for special political missions, even though the Independent Panel had recommended the immediate adoption of the reforms proposed. The current administrative and budgetary arrangements for those missions were inadequate, and had an adverse impact on the regular budget and the accountability, governance and transparency of the Organization. The deficiencies of the current arrangements must be corrected, as called for by the Secretariat, the Advisory Committee and the Board of Auditors. In addition, the Office of Internal Oversight Services should further strengthen its inspection and evaluation capacity in order to contribute to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of special political missions.

16. By its resolution 65/293 the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to submit proposals to address the issue of outstanding amounts due to Member States from closed peacekeeping missions that were in net cash deficit. The relevant current and previous reports must be considered and the issue resolved; Member States in arrears to closed missions must meet their financial obligations.

17. As each peacekeeping operation had a stand-alone budget, approved in accordance with its mandate and specific needs, peacekeeping budgets must be considered individually to ensure the effective and efficient discharge of their respective mandates. Lastly,

the Committee must complete its work on time and, to that end, the Secretariat should make every effort to submit reports within set deadlines in accordance with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

18. **Mr. de Preter** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Armenia, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the States members of the European Union would continue to do what was necessary to ensure that United Nations peacekeeping served to maintain peace and security in a rapidly changing international environment. In addition, the European Union fully supported the steps taken by the Organization to address sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations peacekeepers, which cast a cloud on the integrity of the United Nations as a whole. His delegation commended the hard work of all United Nations personnel involved in the difficult task of peacekeeping and paid tribute to those who had lost their lives while serving in a United Nations peacekeeping mission.

19. As the largest collective financial contributor to peacekeeping, the States members of the European Union attached great importance to effective collaboration between all Member States and the Secretariat. The European Union would closely examine the budgets of all peacekeeping missions, including support functions, with a view to providing them with adequate resources to carry out their mandates. While the overall resource level of $8.3 billion for 2016/17 did not reflect an increase, the goal must be to promote strict budgetary discipline and ensure that resources were truly needed and used effectively, efficiently and in a transparent manner. In that regard, his delegation would scrutinize the effect of such reform initiatives as Umoja and the global field support strategy. His delegation also attached great importance to the support architecture of United Nations peacekeeping and its scalability and interoperability, in particular in relation to the support account, the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe and the Global Service Centre at Brindisi.

20. The States members of the European Union were committed to modernizing the Organization, in particular in the field of peace and development, and would continue to contribute actively to implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Independent panel on Peace Operations. The Organization should adopt a more holistic approach to peace and security, with particular emphasis on conflict prevention and mediation, and the protection of civilians.

21. His delegation remained concerned at the late submission of documents and the failure to comply with the request made by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/247 for reports to be transmitted to the Advisory Committee no later than two weeks in advance of its scheduled consideration of items so as to ensure that, in turn, it provided its advice to the General Assembly no later than two weeks in advance of formal introduction of an item, with an exception for revised estimates and programme budget implications arising in the course of the main part of the session. Regrettably, that was not happening. A structural, holistic, approach was needed to document submission on the basis of a broader assessment of the calendar of meetings and the timing of documentation coming before both the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee.

22. The European Union strongly supported the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Established practice dictated that the Committee should deal with that item at the main part of the seventy-first session on the basis of comprehensive reports by the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee, but if the Bureau decided otherwise all measures must be taken to allow for proper discussion at the current part of the resumed session, including sufficient meeting time.

23. His delegation was concerned at the very limited time allocated to the Committee for the second part of the resumed session. Given that for several years the Committee had been unable to complete its work on time no stone should be left unturned in seeking a lasting solution for future sessions. In the meantime, if the Committee might again be unable to complete its work on time, parallel meetings should be held in early May and, if the Committee was forced to continue its deliberations into June, it must be with the provision of appropriate conference services and the essential support of the Committee secretariat.

24. Back-to-back organization of the second part of the resumed session with the subsequent session of the Committee for Programme and Coordination was no

longer sustainable and hampered the functioning of the Fifth Committee. Accordingly, the Fifth Committee Bureau should formulate a concrete, lasting and structural solution ahead of the next session of the Committee on Conferences.

25. **Mr. Guo Xuejun** (China) said that peacekeeping operations were an important means available to the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security. His delegation paid tribute to the more than 3,000 peacekeepers who had paid the ultimate price in fulfilling their duties.

26. China — the second largest contributor to the peacekeeping budget and a major troop contributor, with over 3,000 Chinese peacekeepers active in various operations — strongly supported United Nations peacekeeping. China intended to continue increasing support for peacekeeping operations and, to that end, would join the newly established Capability Readiness System, would set up a permanent standby formed police unit, and would contribute 8,000 troops to the United Nations peacekeeping standby force. Over the following five years China would train 2,000 peacekeepers for other countries and would implement 10 mine clearance assistance projects, including providing training and equipment. It would also provide $100 million to the African Union in free military assistance and deploy its first helicopter squad to United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa.

27. With regard to organization of work, the Committee should take a practical, scientific and prudent approach to peacekeeping budgeting. His delegation did not support arbitrary reductions and believed that not one cent should be cut for funds that were necessary. At the same time, however, efficiency should be enhanced, and the Organization should put to good use the funds provided by Member States. For money that should not be spent, not one cent should be approved. The Secretariat should ensure full implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors.

28. The concerns of host countries and troop- and police-contributing countries should be fully accommodated. In addition, the mandates of peacekeeping operations and their respective budgets should respect the sovereignty of host countries and reflect their views and needs. Troop- and police-contributing countries had made enormous contributions to United Nations peacekeeping; the Organization should reimburse their peacekeeping expenses and give priority to their candidates in the recruitment of peacekeeping staff.

29. His delegation was seriously concerned at the postponement of consideration of the budget for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the Committee should approve it as soon as possible. Lastly, he regretted that the necessary documents had not been issued in a timely manner and hoped that the Committee would complete its work on time.

30. **Ms. Ayebi-Arthur** (Ghana) said that her delegation was concerned at the Committee's increasing workload and at the limited time scheduled for consideration of each agenda item. Delegations should conduct open, transparent negotiations involving all parties in addressing the issues before the Committee within the time allocated, and avoid closed-door negotiations in small configurations.

31. Timely issuance of documents continued to pose a critical challenge to the effective functioning of the Committee. A number of documents, especially reports of the Advisory Committee, had yet to be issued even though the second part of the resumed session had commenced. Her delegation hoped that, at subsequent sessions, the Secretariat would ensure that the six-week rule for the distribution of required documents was observed. That was vital if her and other small delegations were to have adequate time to study reports.

32. The integrity of the United Nations depended on its ability to deliver its core mandates successfully; the large number of peacekeeping and special political missions were a key component in the maintenance of international peace and security. As one of the top ten contributors to United Nations peacekeeping operations, her Government remained committed to that important mandate. However, with resources becoming increasingly scarce, the Organization should explore ways to improve efficiency, effectiveness and accountability while ensuring that missions were adequately resourced.

33. Her delegation would work closely with all Member States to strengthen peacekeeping and political missions. She was concerned that the Committee had not concluded its work relating to the Sustainable Development Goals and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, as well as to revised estimates for the

Department of Political Affairs and the outcome of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, which were high priorities for her delegation. In September 2015, Member States had made a commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals; her delegation encouraged all negotiating parties to ensure a successful follow-up.

34. In addition to political support, resources and capabilities were critical to the success of peacekeeping and special political missions. It was the responsibility of the Committee to ensure that adequate resources were available in a timely manner. Her delegation would work to strengthen the global partnership and sustain the important work of United Nations peacekeeping operations over the following year.

35. **Mr. Minami** (Japan) said that his delegation attached great importance to United Nations peacekeeping operations and their effective, efficient and accountable performance; the peacekeeping budget should be the priority at the second part of the resumed session.

36. It was regrettable that the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse was still before the Committee. His delegation was seriously concerned that allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse persisted in some peacekeeping operations, notably in the Central African Republic, and strongly supported the zero-tolerance policy. In that regard he welcomed Security Council resolution 2272 (2016), and looked forward to updates.

37. With regard to revised estimates, adequate information, including on mandates and procedural matters, should in all cases be provided in advance. Proposals requiring additional resources should be based on specific mandates agreed upon by intergovernmental bodies and should be fully justified, with explanations of how existing resources would be reprioritized. The more important the issue, the more critical it was to follow proper procedure. Member States could arrive at the right decisions only if proposals were fully documented and supplemented by justifications and only if there was sufficient discussion time. His delegation would participate in negotiations constructively in order to achieve a consensus on all agenda items by the scheduled deadline.

38. **Mr. Nduhuura** (Uganda) acknowledged the important work done by the uniformed and civilian personnel who had dedicated their lives to maintaining international peace and security under the auspices of the United Nations, and paid special tribute to all those who had lost their lives.

39. His Government remained committed to participating in major peacekeeping operations and mediation efforts under the auspices of the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. The United Nations had primary responsibility for keeping peace in the world. Chapter VIII of the Charter provided for the maintenance of peace and security by regional and subregional organizations on behalf of the Organization, so that peacekeeping operations carried out by the African Union were mandated by the Security Council. It was thus illogical that African Union missions were not as well equipped as those that came under the United Nations directly. Considering the high intensity of operations and the harsh environment, a soldier in Somalia should be better funded than any other soldier in United Nations missions. The Organization should consider contributing to the Trust Fund in support of the African Union Mission in Somalia to close the gap created by the shortfall in donor support.

40. With regard to the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe, his delegation welcomed the presentation of the first budget for the Centre: managerial and operational independence would contribute immensely to the streamlining and improvement of management, accountability and ownership, as well as coordination of client missions and host-country support. Lastly, his delegation hoped that the concerns of the Group of African States relating to the budget proposals for United Nations peacekeeping operations would be addressed to enable the missions to adequately fulfil their mandates.

41. **Mr. Burity** (Angola) said that the programme of work should be adjusted based on the availability of documents and the progress made in negotiations.

42. His Government remained a supporter of United Nations peacekeeping operations. He paid tribute to all the personnel who had made the ultimate sacrifice while working in the pursuit of peace.

43. It was regrettable that many documents had been submitted late, including the reports of the Advisory Committee on implementation of the 2030 Agenda for

Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Plan, as well as its reports on the peacekeeping operations scheduled for consideration.

44. The credibility of the United Nations depended on its ability to deliver on its mandates. In an era of increasingly scarce resources, measures were needed to strengthen accountability and enhance efficiency and effectiveness. At the same time, however, missions must be provided with the resources required to discharge their mandates. The nature of conflict had changed in recent years, and peacekeepers must be provided with the best tools to tackle new realities on the ground and emerging challenges in the area of peace and security.

45. All deliberations should be conducted in an open, inclusive and transparent manner; the Committee should refrain from holding negotiations in small configurations, an inefficient practice that created mistrust among delegations. The Committee should shun any practices that undermined the essence of the intergovernmental processes that it must champion and uphold. His delegation was committed to improving the functioning of the Committee and would work with other delegations to explore ways to increase its efficiency. He hoped that the Committee would achieve timely consensus on all issues.

46. **Ms. Coleman** (United States of America) said that peacekeeping operations continued to operate in difficult and dangerous environments. Her delegation commended the Organization on its efforts to respond to evolving security challenges, conflicts and threats, and paid tribute to those who had given their lives in the cause of peace.

47. Peacekeeping budgets should reflect actual requirements, be based on realistic planning assumptions and incorporate prudent management initiatives. Her delegation welcomed many of the initiatives undertaken by the Secretary-General to ensure that resources matched mandates, including strategic assessments of missions, civilian staffing reviews and military capability studies. It encouraged the Secretariat to continue implementing Umoja and the shared services concept, and to focus on realizing benefits from those initiatives and developing the business intelligence necessary to allow for effective work. Her delegation was particularly interested in ensuring that operational and staffing costs were properly presented and justified.

48. Her delegation would carefully examine the proposals of $8.25 billion presented by the Secretary-General for the financial year 2016/17 for 14 peacekeeping missions and the United Nations Support Office in Somalia, as well as the support account and global and regional service centres and the supporting authorities necessary to realize their full potential. She sought further information on the underspends reported in the 2014/15 performance report. In that regard, the Board of Auditors had highlighted continued weaknesses in management, including the use of unrealistic assumptions in budget formulation, inefficient asset management and less than optimal use of air assets.

49. In addition to time-bound budget issues, matters before the Committee at the second part of the resumed session included the peacekeeping reform efforts that had been invigorated by the recent High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and the Secretary-General's plan to implement its recommendations, as well as the 10-year review of the peacebuilding architecture and the global study on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security. Those issues presented a road map for Member States to more effectively address international peace and security challenges and to capitalize on synergies among them. Her delegation looked forward to exploring ways to advance those key reforms through a cross-cutting resolution addressing such issues as empowering the field, strengthening performance, increasing the use of technology, improving medical performance and strengthening environmental management. The Committee should also consider ways to address conflict mediation and prevention.

50. Peacekeeping personnel must abide by the highest standards of conduct and performance, a factor that was critical to the success of reform and to maintaining support for the United Nations. Her delegation wished to see stronger accountability measures to combat sexual exploitation and abuse, and supported the initiatives of the Secretary-General in that regard.

51. Lastly, consideration of items not directly related to peacekeeping or peace activities should not prevent the Committee from completing its work related to peacekeeping on time.

52. **Mr. Khalizov** (Russian Federation) said that the second part of the resumed session traditionally focused on the financing of United Nations peacekeeping operations, and the Committee had a large number of reports on that subject to consider within a limited time frame. Nonetheless, his delegation acknowledged the interest expressed by many delegations in discussing another important subject at the current part of the session — the budget implications of measures to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — and stood ready to seek a constructive approach to that issue.

53. In recent years the budgets of United Nations peacekeeping operations and associated logistical support had been increasing and now exceeded $8 billion. While the Secretariat had made significant efforts to reduce costs, Member States still needed to identify areas of activity where further savings could be made. The reports of the Board of Auditors, the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Advisory Committee all showed that, in some areas, there was room to improve performance and effectiveness. However, cost optimization should not have a negative impact on the implementation of approved mandates.

54. Regarding cross-cutting peacekeeping issues, his delegation was concerned at the use of unmanned aerial vehicles in field missions. The report of the Board of Auditors (A/70/5 (Vol. II)) suggested that the technology, which was expensive, was not particularly effective. His delegation also had serious concerns about the implementation of the global field support strategy and did not understand the practice of launching new experimental projects as part of that strategy in the post-2015 period, when the deadline for implementation of the strategy had already passed. In addition, more detailed justification was needed of requests for the allocation of additional resources for environmental protection projects. The Board of Auditors and OIOS had made a number of criticisms relating to the use of resources allocated for those purposes. Such requests should be clearly linked to the correction of existing shortcomings. Lastly, measures must be taken to ensure the security of air crew working under contract with the Organization during the discharge of their contractual obligations. The information provided on that subject in the Secretary-General's report (A/70/749) was inadequate and unconvincing.

55. **Mr. Sánchez Azcuy** (Cuba) requested information regarding the possibility of extending the second part of the resumed session into June.

56. Before the Committee could make a decision, Member States should be informed of the cost of conference services, including translation and interpretation, per day. The information was particularly important in the light of the availability of interpretation services, and was required so that the Fifth Committee could determine whether an extension into June was wise.

57. He asked whether translators and interpreters from the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management would be available to cover any additional meetings. If not, the Secretariat should indicate the cost of hiring additional translators and interpreters. His delegation also wished to know how the work of the Committee for Programme and Coordination would be affected if the time allowed for completion of the Fifth Committee's programme of work was extended and, in that case, whether it would be necessary to hire additional conference services staff given that the same individuals provided support to both Committees.

58. **The Chair** said that he took it that the Committee wished to approve the proposed programme of work on the understanding that adjustments would be made as necessary during the course of the session.

59. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 148: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy (A/70/609, A/70/742/Add.9 and A/70/779)

60. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the Secretary-General's reports on the budget performance of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 (A/70/609), and the budget for the Base for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/70/779), said that in line with the global field support strategy the Base had been reprofiled as the Global Service Centre, mandated to ensure the effectiveness of field missions. Actual expenditure for 2014/15 had been $66.5 million, representing a budget implementation rate of 94.5 per cent. The proposed 2016/17 budget

amounted to $85.5 million, an increase of 27.4 per cent compared with 2015/16, attributable to the inclusion of recurrent Umoja-related information technology and software licensing costs, previously funded from peacekeeping mission budgets; such centralized applications as the management of customer relations and troop contributions; and, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 56/292, the replacement of obsolete strategic deployment stocks. Four posts in the Standing Police Capacity and five posts in the Integrated Training Service had been abolished and would be replaced with posts in New York and the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe, Uganda, under the support account. Eleven temporary positions had been converted to posts, and the post of Chief of the Service for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunications Technologies had been relocated to Valencia, Spain.

61. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/70/742/Add.9), said that the comprehensive study requested by the General Assembly regarding the deployment of the Global Service Centre in two locations was incomplete. The Advisory Committee recommended that the Secretary-General should ensure that his analysis addressed the organizational, managerial and operational challenges and the financial and human resource implications of deploying the Service for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunications Technologies in the two locations, and should present a revised comprehensive study in his next budget submission. Decisions on the Service's operational needs should, pending further action by the General Assembly, comply with United Nations rules and regulations. The Advisory Committee recommended against most of the Secretary-General's proposals for the redeployment or reassignment of posts between Brindisi and Valencia.

62. The Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should request an audit to clarify the proposed write-off of obsolete strategic deployment stocks and the request for $5 million over a two-year period for their replenishment, and to independently assess their review and rotation. Before stocks were replenished, the General Assembly must receive assurances that procedures to ensure their proper use and rotation and avoid future write-offs had been implemented.

63. With regard to the consolidation of recurrent Umoja support costs in the proposed 2016/17 budget, Umoja and other enterprise systems were used by all Secretariat entities and costs should be transparently shared among all users and funding sources. The Secretary-General should provide details of a Secretariat-wide cost recovery framework for the enterprise systems hosted by the Service for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunications Technologies in his next progress report on the implementation of the information and communications technology (ICT) strategy. A performance management framework for Secretariat-wide ICT services, with clear lines of responsibility and accountability, should be established.

64. Pending clarification of comments made in its report on the peacekeeping support account (A/70/837), the Advisory Committee recommended against the relocation of the Integrated Training Service to the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe and the abolishment of the five related posts at the Logistics Base. Any scalability model for the Base must take into account the specific characteristics of its activities, which differed from those of the Centre at Entebbe, and should allow its capacities to be adapted to changes in the volume of peacekeeping activities. The Advisory Committee's recommendations on the Secretary-General's proposals regarding posts and positions, consultants, official travel, vehicle acquisition and the replenishment of strategic deployment stocks would result in a $2.7 million reduction in the proposed 2016/17 budget.

65. **Ms. Wairatpanij** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the functioning of the Logistics Base, whose efficient operation was essential to support peacekeeping, needed to improve. The Group would seek additional information regarding the Advisory Committee's concerns about the Service for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunications Technologies, which the Secretary-General had not addressed in his report on the proposed budget for the Base (A/70/779). A performance management framework for Secretariat-wide ICT services, presenting clear lines of responsibility and accountability, should be developed. The proposed designation of the Valencia facility was not consistent with its sole use for ICT. Information on the location of posts should, to improve transparency and in accordance with resolution 69/309, be presented

in the organization charts, which should clearly differentiate between Brindisi and Valencia. Notwithstanding the differences between the activities of the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe and those of the Logistics Base, the Secretary-General should make proposals on the scalability of the Base.

66. The Group looked forward to the Secretary-General's report on the return on investment in the Strategic Air Operations Centre. It would request clarification of the roles of the Logistics Base, the Regional Service Centre and the Department of Field Support in air operations management for field missions. It was concerned about the loss of $5 million in obsolete equipment, would request clarification regarding the management of strategic deployment stocks, including staff capacities for their processing, and looked forward to the comprehensive report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the matter. It supported the use of in-house capacities rather than external consultants.

Updated financial position of closed peacekeeping missions as at 30 June 2015 (A/70/552 and A/70/829)

67. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the Secretary-General's report on the updated financial position of closed peacekeeping missions as at 30 June 2015 (A/70/552), said that, as at 30 June 2015, of the 26 closed peacekeeping missions 21 had had cash surpluses in a total amount of $70 million, and the remaining five had had cash deficits totalling $86.5 million. Pending the receipt of outstanding assessed contributions, $63 million was owed to troop-contributing countries. Because the General Assembly had, since its sixty-sixth session, deferred consideration of the Secretary-General's proposals to address the outstanding dues to Member States in respect of contingent-owned equipment and letters of assist from closed missions with cash deficits, the report contained an update on the financial information presented in previous reports rather than new proposals.

68. Cash surpluses from closed missions had been used to alleviate shortfalls in active operations in the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) and the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA). Peak borrowings, which usually occurred in July and August, had declined from $57 million in August 2013 to $30 million in July 2015. The balance of cross-borrowings at the end of December 2015 had been $28.5 million.

69. The liquidity of active operations was not directly linked to cash surpluses in closed missions, but, given the liquidity problems of MINURSO, UNMIK, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS), the Secretary-General proposed that the General Assembly should authorize temporary borrowing between active missions. Another option was the establishment of a working capital fund for peacekeeping, similar to the one for the programme budget. If no new mechanism was approved, the General Assembly was requested to allow the retention of the net cash balance of $70 million available in 21 closed peacekeeping missions as at 30 June 2015.

70. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/70/829), said that the Advisory Committee reiterated its observations and recommendations on the proposals contained in the Secretary-General's four previous reports on the matter, consideration of which the General Assembly had decided to defer to the current session along with the Advisory Committee's related reports. The cash position of closed peacekeeping missions had improved and the surpluses available for credit to Member States should be returned in full in a timely manner. Short-term borrowing from the surpluses had declined, possibly because of improved timeliness in the receipt of assessed contributions. The Advisory Committee recommended that any surplus over the amount retained to cover the temporary cash needs of active missions should be returned to Member States.

71. The Secretary-General's proposal for the General Assembly to authorize limited borrowing between active missions or, as an alternative, to establish a $100-million working capital fund for peacekeeping, did not address the late payment of assessed contributions or the use of Member State contributions paid on time to meet the obligations of Member States that had not yet paid. The Secretary-General should explore options for addressing late payment. The Advisory Committee recommended that updated

balances for missions with cash surpluses should be provided to the General Assembly when it considered the Secretary-General's report.

72. **Mr. Chamglongrasdr** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group was concerned by the cash deficits in several closed peacekeeping missions. Member States were obliged under the Charter to pay their assessed contributions in full, without conditions and in a timely manner. The cash requirements of peacekeeping operations should be properly addressed, as should outstanding payments to troop- and police-contributing countries in respect of closed peacekeeping missions, regardless of such missions' cash deficits. By General Assembly resolution 65/293, the Secretary-General had been requested to submit proposals to resolve the matter. Given that the outstanding amounts were long overdue and that many proposals had been presented, full payment to Member States, in particular troop- and police-contributing countries, was the most feasible solution.

Agenda item 151: Financing of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (A/70/604, A/70/712 and A/70/742/Add.12)

Agenda item 157: Financing of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (A/70/602, A/70/740 and A/70/742/Add.4)

Agenda item 159: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (A/70/595, A/70/719 and A/70/742/Add.11)

Agenda item 161: Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East

(a) United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (A/70/572, A/70/695 and A/70/742/Add.1)

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (A/70/571, A/70/699 and A/70/742/Add.8)

73. **Ms. Bartsiotas** (Controller), introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 (A/70/604) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/70/712) for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), said that the proposed 2016/17 budget amounted to $931.1 million, an increase of 14.4 per cent over the approved 2015/16 budget. As MINUSCA embarked on the third and final year of its establishment phase, the proposal reflected its efforts to reach full deployment and infrastructure, including greater numbers of military and police in line with the increase in authorized strength, and a higher level of civilian personnel and operating costs.

74. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 (A/70/602) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/70/740) for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, she said that the proposed 2016/17 budget of $346.9 million represented a decrease of 8.8 per cent compared with the 2015/16 appropriation, attributable to the downsizing of the Mission, with the abolishment of 177 posts and positions and the closure of the regional offices in Gonaïves and the West Department. In 2015/16 MINUSTAH had supported the presidential and legislative elections; its operating environment would be shaped by the electoral process.

75. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 (A/70/595) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/70/719) for the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), she said that the proposed 2016/17 budget of $205.1 million represented a decrease of 40.5 per cent compared with 2015/16, reflecting the drawdown of military and police capacity in accordance with Security Council resolution 2239 (2015) and the consequent reduction in civilian personnel and operational costs. The greatest challenge for the Mission was the transfer of security responsibilities to the Government of Liberia.

76. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 (A/70/572) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/70/695) for the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), she said that the proposed 2016/17 budget of $47.7 million represented a decrease of 7.7 per cent compared with the approved 2015/16 budget, attributable to the use of a higher vacancy factor in the computation of military personnel costs in the light of the security situation in the area of operations.

77. Introducing the budget performance report for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 (A/70/571) and the proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017 (A/70/699) for the United

Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), she said that the proposed 2016/17 budget amounted to $499.4 million, a decrease of 1.4 per cent compared with the approved 2015/16 budget, attributable to reduced requirements for military personnel and the end of the outsourcing of building and generator services. The budget reflected the proposed conversion of 11 international staff posts to national posts.

78. **Mr. Ruiz Massieu** (Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's report on MINUSCA (A/70/742/Add.12), said that the Board of Auditors had raised issues related to planning and budget estimates for the 2014/15 period, when MINUSCA had been a start-up mission. Justification for proposed redeployments should have been clearly indicated, since the budget had been based on a results-based framework. The Advisory Committee's recommendations would entail a $1.8 million reduction in the Secretary-General's proposed 2016/17 budget (A/70/712). The staffing proposals for 2016/17 reflected the establishment of 210 posts and positions, the abolishment of 77, and the exclusion of 44 that had been included in the 2015/16 budget as the Mission's contribution to the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe as a client mission. According to the Secretary-General, the proposed increase in civilian personnel would meet the requirements of the final phase of the Mission's establishment programme.

79. The cost calculations relating to the proposed deployment of unmanned aerial systems and other surveillance equipment were unclear. In addition, the proposed 2016/17 budget did not reflect resource requirements arising from Security Council resolution 2264 (2016), which authorized 68 additional corrections officers. The Advisory Committee had been informed that the financial impact of the increase could be $3 million. The Secretariat would closely monitor resource requirements and would take the Mission's wider priorities into account in resource distribution.

80. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on MINUSTAH (A/70/742/Add.4), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the proposed 2016/17 budget and the reductions in civilian staff, while trusting that the Mission would be capable of supporting the Government of Haiti in the electoral process and assisting staff affected by downsizing. The planned reduction in the number of flying hours must not adversely affect the Mission's airlift capability. The provision to the Government of support for the rule of law should be described in the substantive part of the budget rather than under operational costs; the Secretary-General should provide information thereon in the relevant performance reports.

81. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on UNMIL (A/70/742/Add.11), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the Secretary-General's proposals. As the Mission drew down, it should reduce its environmental footprint, as requested in resolution 69/307.

82. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on UNDOF (A/70/742/Add.1), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended a small reduction in the resources proposed for official travel in 2016/17.

83. Introducing the Advisory Committee's report on UNIFIL (A/70/742/Add.8), he said that the Advisory Committee recommended a 5-per-cent reduction in the resources proposed for official travel as the requested supporting information had not been received and a proper analysis could not be undertaken. Because the resources for training had not been fully utilized in previous financial periods, resources under that rubric should be reduced to the amount expended the previous year. The Advisory Committee recommended that the rationale for reversing the decision to outsource building and generator maintenance services, which had resulted in the abolishment of 48 engineering posts, should be provided to the General Assembly, with cost comparisons covering both direct and indirect costs.

84. **Mr. Kisoka** (United Republic of Tanzania), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, paid tribute to United Nations and African Union peacekeepers, in particular those who had lost their lives. The Group noted the budget performance for 2014/15 and the projected expenditure for 2015/16. The 2014/15 financial performance for the active peacekeeping operations, the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe, the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi and the support account, to which $8.5 billion had been allocated, had been 96.7 per cent. The Group would welcome details of budget implementation for facilities and infrastructure, accommodation, recruitment, human resources management, medical services, ICT training and expenditure, troop and equipment reimbursement, and reform initiatives.

85. The resources proposed for 2016/17 for United Nations peacekeeping missions and the African Union Mission in Somalia amounted to $8.25 billion, a reduction of 0.3 per cent compared with 2015/16. The Group attached great importance to the allocation of adequate resources to peacekeeping operations, in particular those in Africa, to ensure the fulfilment of their mandates, taking into account the unique circumstances justifying those mandates and the magnitude of the challenges posed by field operations. It would welcome details of the assumptions underpinning each mission budget and the extent to which the proposed resources were compatible with the fulfilment of mandates.

86. The Security Council had primary responsibility for international peace and security, with the role of regional arrangements and agencies being discharged in compliance with the Charter. Yet such peacekeeping support missions as AMISOM, which were operated by regional and subregional organizations with the approval of the Security Council, did not receive the same treatment as those operated by the United Nations. Pursuant to the outcome document of the summit of the troop- and police-contributing countries of AMISOM, held in Djibouti in February 2016, the United Nations should support AMISOM through UNSOS, in particular by ensuring that AMISOM troops and contingent-owned equipment were reimbursed in the same way as in United Nations peacekeeping missions, in accordance with the Charter and Security Council resolutions 2036 (2012), 2093 (2013), and 2111 (2013).

87. In scrutinizing the budget proposals, the Group would treat the consideration of peacekeeping budgets as an exercise not in cost reduction but in responsible mandate implementation, resource allocation and policy guidance. It would monitor such cross-cutting issues as mission support, Umoja implementation, the post-global field support strategy period, facilities and infrastructure, oversight, ethical matters, supply chains, environmental and waste management, and questions linked to the recommendations of the High-level Panel on Peace Operations. The Committee should conduct its work transparently and inclusively. The Group encouraged delegations to avoid tactics that could adversely affect the Committee's work and populations in mission areas.

88. **Mr. Fermín** (Dominican Republic), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, said that the Community reaffirmed its solidarity with Haiti and recognized the importance of international efforts to support the country's national priorities and sovereignty. The States members of CELAC had contributed most of the military personnel and police of MINUSTAH and provided technical cooperation, humanitarian assistance and medical teams. The Mission was essential to stability, the rule of law and social and economic development, in particular through reconstruction following the 2010 earthquake. The challenges facing Haiti required firm United Nations commitment even as the functions of MINUSTAH were transferred to the Government. The country's vulnerability to humanitarian crises, social violence and health problems emphasized the vital role of the Mission, which strengthened institutions, national security, democratic governance, the rule of law, human rights, and the security of military, police and civilian personnel.

89. His delegation would consider in depth the proposed reduction in the 2016/17 budget with a view to ensuring that MINUSTAH had the resources to fulfil its mandate. It rejected arbitrary reductions in the Mission's resources. The budget, like those of other peacekeeping missions, should be based on the situation on the ground and the Security Council mandate rather than artificial budget ceilings. MINUSTAH should receive the resources necessary to provide technical, logistical and security support during the electoral process. The Community would request details of the proposed dissolution of the Electoral Assistance Section, which would entail the abolishment of many posts and could adversely affect mandate fulfilment. The community violence reduction programmes and quick-impact projects had proved essential to sustainable peace and security. In particular quick-impact projects had improved relations between MINUSTAH and the local population, and should continue in line with the Haitian Government's priorities. The 25-per-cent reduction in resources for those projects could adversely affect their implementation. His delegation was also concerned that the cuts in air transportation could affect medical evacuation, bearing in mind that the General Assembly, in its resolution 69/299, had requested the Secretary-General to evacuate medical cases and casualties to level IV hospitals.

90. **Mr. Awad** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the deployment of UNDOF had been necessitated by

Israel's occupation of the Syrian Golan and its refusal to abide by Security Council and General Assembly resolutions calling for a full withdrawal to the line of 4 June 1967, so that its financing was the responsibility of the Israeli aggressor in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1874 (S-IV) and the legal principle that the party that had caused the harm was responsible for reparation.

91. The Secretary-General's reports must be neutral, not politicized, and reflect reality, yet the 2014/15 budget performance report (A/70/572) and the proposed 2016/17 budget (A/70/695) ignored the reason for the deterioration in the security situation on the Bravo side, which was attributable to activities by terrorist groups that were targeting institutions and infrastructure throughout Syrian territory, including UNDOF installations, as stated elsewhere by the Secretary-General. The reports also ignored Israeli military activities in support of such terrorist groups as Al-Qaida and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, including the treatment of their wounded in Israeli hospitals, with the resultant increase in tension in the area of separation, to the detriment of the security of UNDOF personnel and the work of the Force. The occupying forces' active role in acts of aggression against UNDOF had allowed terrorist groups to move around freely, kidnap UNDOF peacekeepers and fire on them and their positions, taking no responsibility for the harm. The Secretary-General's reports referred ambiguously to the terrorist groups' "hostile takeover of an UNDOF position and the detention of peacekeepers", but did not mention the involvement of Jabhat al-Nusrah, which was affiliated with Al-Qaida and included in the Consolidated United Nations Security Council Sanctions List.

92. The terrorists had used abandoned UNDOF positions to attack Syrian forces with the Israeli occupier's support. UNDOF must return to its positions as soon as possible: his Government had offered to help the Force redeploy in and was working to expel the terrorists from the area of separation. The situation was serious and must be addressed without delay, given that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had ignored his Government's warnings in recent years.

93. The Secretary-General had stated in his 2014/15 budget performance report that the instability and firing in the area of separation were attributable to the civil conflict in Syria, with no reference to the perpetrators. The Secretariat had ignored the Israeli violations of the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement. What it called a civil conflict was, in fact, a war on terror fought by his Government on the world's behalf, in accordance with Security Council counter-terrorism resolutions. It described the terrorist groups in the area of separation, which had committed the worst forms of terrorism against the Syrian people and had targeted UNDOF peacekeepers, as armed groups or armed opposition elements. The report should be corrected, and future reports should better reflect reality.

94. The proposed 8-per-cent decrease in the UNDOF budget would be an injustice in what was one of the smaller missions in terms of personnel and budget. The Secretariat systematically reduced the budget and staffing of UNDOF every year. The proposed abolishment of two international and 12 national General Service posts and two international temporary positions was prejudicial to the Force, particularly local Syrian personnel, and was not justified by the situation in the area of operations, the reduction in the number of military positions on the Bravo side or the relocation of UNDOF headquarters, since the situation was temporary and the Force would return to its former headquarters as soon as possible. His Government had recently facilitated military and civilian patrols for UNDOF. It had opposed the Force's withdrawal from the area of separation, in particular from its headquarters at Camp Faouar, and had simplified measures to allow UNDOF to return soon. The Disengagement of Forces Agreement and the agreement on basic operational procedures governing the Force's work in regional cooperation, management practices for recruitment, the establishment of posts and the definition of post functions must be respected, and the work of United Nations missions in the region must not overlap. Some had political or humanitarian mandates, while the UNDOF mandate was the military one of enforcing the ceasefire and had nothing to do with Syrian internal affairs.

95. His delegation therefore objected to the references in the Secretary-General's 2014/15 budget performance report to direct telecommunication links between UNDOF and the Office of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Syria, since the Force had no political relationship with the Office; to cooperation between UNDOF and the United Nations country team to monitor the security situation throughout Syria,

given that the Force's mandate was limited to the area of separation; and to cooperation between UNDOF and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on humanitarian issues, which had nothing to do with the UNDOF mandate. Cooperation between the Force and ICRC should be limited to helping Syrian citizens to cross the occupied Syrian Golan and transport their crops. Exceeding the Force's mandate would constitute meddling in his country's internal affairs. The mandates of peacekeeping missions must not overlap without government authorization.

96. His Government had provided every support for UNDOF, intended as a temporary presence pending implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and an end to the occupation of the Golan, and not as an alternative to a lasting settlement. It condemned the meeting recently held by the Government of Israel in the occupied Syrian Golan, a grave provocation showing that country's lack of respect for international law, in particular Security Council resolution 497 (1981), pursuant to which the Israeli decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan was null and void and without international legal effect. His Government aspired to the return through international law of the Golan, which the Disengagement of Forces Agreement and relevant resolutions affirmed was an integral part of the Syrian Arab Republic, and to a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

97. **Mr. Ruiz Blanco** (Colombia), noting the 8.8-per-cent reduction in the budget for MINUSTAH, said that although the Mission mandate had been extended until October 2016, the political situation in Haiti was complex because of the postponement of the elections. The resources allocated to MINUSTAH must allow it to support the electoral process in accordance with its mandate. It was essential to institutional and political stability and the rule of law, without which security and prosperity were impossible. It must be allocated enough resources to fulfil its mandate and preserve the progress made. The commitment of the United Nations through MINUSTAH was essential to political and constitutional progress in Haiti. His Government would strengthen the capacities of the Haitian National Police through officer training and the participation of Colombian police in MINUSTAH.

98. **Mr. Goren** (Israel) said that his delegation welcomed the adoption of innovative technology to enhance situational awareness and protect peacekeepers and civilians. The Secretary-General noted in his report on the overview of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/70/749) that, at the end of 2015, 43 per cent of the peacekeeping environment had been classified as dangerous, compared with 25 per cent in 2011. Of the 121 peacekeeping fatalities in 2015, 28 per cent had resulted from malicious acts. As mandates and operational environments became more complex, peacekeepers must receive the technological support they needed. Innovative technology could mitigate the environmental effects of peacekeeping operations, which must uphold the highest standards in energy, waste management and water production. Member States must support the Secretariat and missions to ensure that "greening the blue" became more than a tag line.

99. The comments of the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic on the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East were ridiculous. The presence of Hezbollah, Al-Qaida, Jabhat al-Nusrah and other terror groups on his country's northern borders, along with the Syrian army, which had unleashed chemical warfare on its own civilians, was challenging for Israelis and peacekeepers alike. Israel would support UNIFIL and UNDOF in the Committee as it did in the field. The Committee should not be subject to political hijacking. The acceptance by many delegations that the spirit of consensus did not extend to the discussions on UNIFIL was troubling.

100. **Mr. Awad** (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his delegation rejected the allegations of the Israeli representative, which were no more than an attempt to divert attention from the occupation of the Syrian Golan. That Israel was an occupying State was not a matter of contention but had been confirmed in United Nations resolutions, pursuant to which Israel must return the Syrian Golan, despite the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic. Through the Security Council and the Non-Aligned Movement, the world had condemned the recent escalation by Israel, which had been proved in United Nations reports to have harboured terrorist groups.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.